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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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# Acclaimed Journalist and Filmmaker David Wilson to Explore Race in America

Public invited to free President's Distinguished Speakers Series event with award-winning documentary filmmaker David Wilson



March 4, 2014 | Public Affairs Staff

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – In April 2008, journalist and filmmaker David Wilson reignited a national dialog on today's race issues by releasing a groundbreaking documentary film, "Meeting David Wilson." The film followed his journey to North Carolina where he not only discovered the plantation where his relatives were enslaved, but also a descendent of the slave master: a 62-year-old white man also named David Wilson.

On Tuesday, April 1, members of the public are invited to spend an evening with Wilson, learn more about his transformative journey and discuss America's racial divide as part of the President's Distinguished Speakers Series.

The conversation will showcase clips from the award-winning documentary and focus on Wilson's nationwide effort to illuminate America's persisting racial divide and struggle to talk about race in the United States. While much of his presentation, "How to Talk About Race," focuses on the racial dilemmas of today, Wilson will also demonstrate how the country's history plays a role in creating the problem, and how it is in the interest of America's future that society collectively plays a part in the solution.

"We are pleased to welcome David Wilson, a uniquely talented and accomplished filmmaker and journalist to our campus for the President's Distinguished Speaker Series," says RWU President Donald J. Farish. "David's remarkable work has boldly pushed the boundaries of how we speak about race by driving an open and honest discussion examining race relations in society. It takes great courage to honestly confront these issues and we look forward to furthering that dialogue with our campus community."

A sought-after pundit for news programs from "World News Tonight" to "Today," Wilson has emerged as a leading voice in the national conversation about race relations in the United States, drawing on history, current events and personal experience to engage audiences and inspire productive dialog.

From Newark to New York to North Carolina, Wilson is retraining the public discourse about race and illuminating stories that reflect the Black community. He is the founder and executive editor of theGrio.com, the first and largest video-based news portal dedicated to providing African-Americans the stories that appeal to them but are unavailable and underrepresented in national news outlets.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree from Rowan University, Wilson has since developed an extensive background in video and news production. Wilson has worked on the CBS news program "48 Hours," as well as serving as lead producer and overseeing newsroom operations for Network News Service, a national news gathering service and an ABC, CBS and FOX News conglomerate.

The April 1 presentation will take place in the Roger Williams School of Law Appellate Court Room 283 on the University's Bristol campus at One Old Ferry Road. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the event will begin at 7:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public; no tickets are required. For more information, call (401) 254-3154.

Launched in 2011, the President's Distinguished Speakers Series at Roger Williams University invites thought leaders from a wide range of disciplines to share perspectives, inspire conversations and enrich the intellectual lives of students, faculty and staff at Roger Williams as well as members of the local community. As part of the series, each guest is invited to devote much of the daylong visit to direct engagement with students in classroom sessions, offering RWU students unique opportunities for one-on-one interactions with some of the world's leading authors, scholars, artists and public servants.